

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01743 160935Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /022 W
-----161719Z 055578 /43

R 160852Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2217
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
JCS WASHDC
NWC/ICAF FT MCNAIR WASH DC
SECDEF WASHDC//OASD/ISA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OTRA, MILI, SY
SUBJECT: PROPOSED NWC VISIT #12 TO SYRIA (INTERIM RESPONSE)

REF: STATE 049058

1. SINCE PROPOSED NWC TRIP TO SYRIA WOULD BE FIRST EVER, AMBASSADOR WISHES TO EXPLORE SUBJECT INFORMALLY WITH SARG OFFICIALS BEFORE MAKING DECISION ON VISIT. APPOINTMENTS HAVE BEEN PENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE FOR OVER A WEEK. AS SOON AS SOUNDINGS TAKEN, AMBASSADOR WILL DECIDE ON WHETHER OR NOT TO MAKE FORMAL REQUEST.

2. IF CONDITIONS SEEM FAVORABLE AND SARG APPROVES VISIT IN PRINCIPLE, EMBASSY WOULD PREFER THAT IT TAKE PLACE SO THAT ORDER OF STOPS BE REVERSED WITH GROUP VISITING SYRIA FIRST BEGINNING O/A 1 MAY. IN THIS CONNECTION, THERE IS A DIRECT PANAM CONNECTION NEW YORK - ROME - DAMASCUS WHICH ARRIVES DAMASCUS AT 1630L 1 MAY (FLIGHT #PA 110). WE ESTIMATE TWO OR TWO AND ONE-HALF DAYS IN DAMASCUS ABOUT RIGHT TO ACCOMPLISH PURPOSE OF VISIT.

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3. IF SARG APPROVES VISIT WE EXPECT THAT THEY WILL HANDLE MOST, IF NOT ALL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SCHEDULING ARRANGEMENTS. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS LIKELY TO US THAT THE NEW GROUP WILL NOT RECEIVE HIGH LEVEL RECEPTION WHICH IN THE PAST HAS BEEN AFFORDED NWC IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS JORDAN, ISRAEL, AND IRAN. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT SYRIANS

WILL NOT BE HOSPITABLE EVEN GRACIOUS, BUT LANGUAGE PROBLEMS AND DEMANDS ON THE TIME OF SENIOR SYRIAN OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY PRESIDENT ASAD, LEAD US TO CONCLUDE THAT SYRIAN RECEPTION UNLIKELY TO BE AS HIGH LEVEL OR FORTHCOMING AS NWC HAS COME TO EXPECT ELSEWHERE. EMBASSY OF COURSE WILL PROVIDE FULL RANGE OF BRIEFINGS AND OTHER ASSISTANCE.

4. IF VISIT TAKES PLACE AMBASSADOR CONSIDERS PRESENCE OF FLAG, GENERAL OFFICER, OR AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL LEADER A VIRTUAL NECESSITY. WHILE THIS WILL NOT RAISE LEVEL OF RECEPTION, FROM PROTOCOL STANDPOINT SYRIANS WILL EXPECT LEADER OF SUCH RANK.

5. WE SUGGEST NWC PLAN ON HIRING BUS FOR TRIP DAMASCUS - AMMAN OR VICE VERSA. TRIP TAKES ABOUT FOUR HOURS EITHER WAY. BUSES ARE MODERN, COMFORTABLE AND RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE. ROUTE IS INTERESTING FROM POINT OF VIEW OF GROUP'S STUDY OBJECTIVES.

6. IF TRIP TAKES PLACE, PROJECT OFFICER FOR SYRIA WILL BE COL ANGUS M. MUNDY, USA, DATT. CABLE BEST MEANS OF COMMUNICATIONS IN VIEW OF VERY SLOW MAIL SERVICE. MAIL ADDRESS, HOWEVER, IS "USDAO DAMASCUS, STATE DEPT POUCH RM, WASH, DC 20520."
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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